

Perhaps I am underestimating the wide-ranging interests of most biologists, but in this day and age of highly scrutinized library acquisitions it does seem unlikely that such an unfocused set of reviews will find an audience.

The pity about this collection is that it detracts from the quality of the reviews themselves and from the hard work that the volume editor has obviously put into the production of this volume. The series editors would be well-advised to reconsider the editorial policy and aim to generate individual volumes that collect a series of reviews that cover one, more focused, topic. Given the quality of the reviews they have been able to collect thus far, it is likely that better focused collections would have the audience they deserve.

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Books received

Evolution in Health and Disease. Stephen C. Stearns (ed.). Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1999. Pp. 328. Price £23.50, paperback. ISBN 0 19 850445 4.

Island Biogeography — Ecology, Evolution and Conservation. Robert J. Whittaker. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1998. Pp. 285. Price £50.00, hardback. ISBN 0 19 850021 1.

The Origins of Life: From the Birth of Life to the Origin of Language. John Maynard Smith and Eörs Szathmáry. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1999. Pp. 180. Price £18.99, hardback. ISBN 0 19 850493 4. (*See review above.*)

The Evolution of Avian Breeding Systems. J. David Ligon. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1999. Pp. 504. Price £55.00, hardback. ISBN 0 19 854913 X.